



Buzzwords ...

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..... the newsletter for National Beekeepers' Association members

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WE HAVE PROVED THAT HUMANS
CAN LIVE IN OUTER SPACE AND
AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA—

I KNOW.
IT'S THE
AREA IN
BETWEEN
THAT'S
TOUGH—



JAM BAIT UPDATE

Bovine TB is spreading rapidly throughout the country. This problem is creating a lot of interest and concern in the farming sector, and the calls for control of possums are becoming louder as a result.

Most of you should be already aware that one of the methods for eradicating possums currently being used by the Agricultural Pest Destruction Council is the so-called "jam" baits, mixed with 1080 as the toxin (see *Buzzwords* March, April and May 1989 issues).

As a result of efforts made by the NBA executive and MAF AAOs, we have been receiving greater consideration from the APDC. So far serious poisonings of hives have been

largely avoided. We do continue to receive occasional reports of isolated incidents, and the potential for more is considerable.

In an attempt to further raise the awareness of those in control of these programmes, the NBA vice president Gavin White, and the MAF AAO from Palmerston North Ted Roberts, spoke to the recent annual conference of Pest Destruction Officers in Blenheim. These are the people "on the ground" in the control programmes, and our viewpoint was well received and appreciated.

There have been a couple of helpful developments coming from all this lobbying from our industry. Firstly, the restricted area for the use of 1080 jam baits around beehives has been

extended from the original 400 metres to one kilometre. Not perfect you will agree - but an improvement nonetheless.

Secondly, notification for the beekeeper has been included in the protocol for each Pest Destruction Officer to follow in implementing these programmes, and given second priority rating. The main way of achieving this is currently through the MAF apiary register and code number system. If you have any apiaries that aren't on the register or don't have your number displayed clearly in, don't expect any sympathy if you get clobbered in a poisoning programme.

Thirdly, the research into an appropriate repellent for inclusion in jam baits has been continuing, and results show some promise. Following Mark Goodwin's recommendations from MAF Ruakura for the use of either molasses or oxalic acid, the APDC has carried out cage trials on possums for bait acceptability. While there was some resistance to taking the treated baits, most possums consumed enough jam to receive a lethal dose of 1080, and the APDC have agreed to take this further into field trials.

We will await these results with some interest, and hope that eventually a bee repellent additive can be routinely included in jam baits. The ideal situation would of course be for use of 1080 jam baits to be discontinued altogether, and there has been a lot of publicity recently calling for a full investigation of possum control methods other than 1080. Suggestions have included using professional hunters, trappings, cyanide poisoning, and more direct land-owner control on their own properties.

The debate continues, as does the monitoring of developments by the Executive and MAF AAOs. So far the impact of local body administration of pest control programmes has not become clear. Recently we warned you to find out your own local system and get in touch with the appropriate person. Perhaps invite someone from your local body to your next NBA branch meeting or field day to discuss the administrative changes now taking place and how they will affect you as a beekeeper.

Executive would also like to hear directly from any beekeeper who encounters a problem resulting from the use of 1080 in possum control programmes, so please contact your closest executive member or the NBA secretary. If you suspect a poisoning, then take samples and arrange for appropriate testing through a MAF adviser - contact them for details.

Allen McCaw, NBA President.

TELECOM STRIKES AGAIN IN THE DEEP SOUTH

Having already consigned the NBA president's former antiquated telephone system to the museum of ancient technology, Telecom has decided to really confuse the issue with yet another set of number changes in the southern regions.

Effective from 4th November 1989, Allan McCaw's telephone and fax number will be changed to (03417) 7198. The last

changes resulted in some frustration for people wanting to speak to the president, but he reported that his evenings were quite peaceful for a couple of weeks afterwards. Buzzwords understands that Maria McCaw will now be applying for a new phone number every month.

FAX DIRECTORY

On the subject of communications - do you have a fax number? If so, fax it to *Buzzwords* (number on the last page of this issue) and we'll put together a directory for the next issue.



QUEEN BEE COMPETITION

The hunt is on for New Zealand's finest queen bees. A competition this season will sort out queen bees produced by our beekeepers.

This competition is being organized by an NBA sub-committee headed by Reg Clarke of Blenheim. Many of you will know of the interest Reg has in improving queen bee quality. In the August issue of *Buzzwords*, we reviewed his paper on what makes better queens.

The competition sub-committee is currently deciding on final details, such as date, time, and number of queens per entry, and costs. But it definitely goes ahead this season.

They are keen to involve as many beekeepers as possible: everyone of us has a vested interest in queens of the highest possible quality. Every queen producer, from the enthusiastic hobbyist through commercial beekeepers to the largest queen producer business, has something to gain from joining in.

This is a shop window for present quality, a challenge to sharpen up skills, and a cost-effective tool for improving business profitability.

The essence of the competition is that queens will be subjected to the standard physiological tests; weight, ovariole number, spermatheca volume, and sperm amount. These will be reduced to a single-figure score, from which penalty points will be deducted for nosema infection.

Contestants will then be graded into four classes: gold, silver and bronze awards, and of course there will be some who fall below the standards set who will get no award. To save face and avoid commercial damage, those falling into the "no-award" class will not be publicly identified.

For further details and entry forms, write to
Reg Clarke
81 Lakings Road
Blenhiem.

And by the way, have you ever realised that we produce one of the most expensive products in the world? At 4 queens to the gram, and \$12 each, queens are worth \$48000 a kilogram.

BEE REPELLENT

An alternative to benzaldehyde for your fume boards is "Bee Go". Comvita Laboratories in Te Puke have this product in stock.

VAX MOTH PARASITE

One of the most common parasites on the greater wax moth in the USA is a small wasp called *Apanteles*. Dave Grueber of MAF in Blenheim has sent some samples in of parasitised wax moths, which according to DSIR have been killed by this beast. This might lead to another control option being available to us.

MAF apiculture unit

HONEY RESEARCH CONTINUES

New Zealand produces the most anti-bacterial honey around: that's the good news from Waikato University. Researchers there have been working for over 10 years on the bacteria-killing properties of Kiwi honey types.

The work continues, and the university is looking for more honey samples. This time they would like larger samples of honey from a single floral source, at least two and preferably six kilograms.



The honey must be as pure as possible, so don't take it from a tank. Scrape the honey from the comb: even crushed comb is OK, they don't mind taking the wax out. Please avoid getting pollen in the sample, as it upsets identification.

The university is prepared to pay for carefully-prepared samples, so you can include an invoice at the going rate.

You might like to donate the honey, though, because your industry has received a lot of publicity from this research in New Zealand and overseas magazines, both popular and scientific. There's also been items on the radio and the recent one on TV.

Samples to:

Dr Peter Molan
Biochemistry Department
University of Waikato
Private Bag
Hamilton

MAF apiculture unit

LODGIES

Honey and fruit concentrate sachets are the latest challenge to tea and coffee.

Produced by Lodgies Foods of Auckland, these additive free beverages can be served hot or cold and are popular with restaurants seeking alternatives to tea and coffee.

The easy tear sachets come in six flavours: apricot, lemon, tangelo, blackcurrant, orange/mango and cherry.

The beverages contain no preservatives, no anti-toxidants, no artificial colouring or flavouring and no added sugars (except honey).

The company reports that export orders have been received with Australia being the first recipient of the new product range. Seems that this is the only way the Aussies will take our honey!

NEW FOOD MAGAZINE

Companies operating in the food and health field, such as honey packers, should be aware of the new Consumers Institute magazine that has been launched recently. The publication is called *Consumer Food and Health*, and it contains consumer tests as well as information articles.

This needn't be negative for beekeepers of course, because you certainly wouldn't complain if the Institute gave your product a good mark.

TRACHEAL MITES

Beekeeping scientists in the United States are becoming increasingly concerned about the effects of tracheal mites on the beekeeping industry.

It seems that one of the most serious effects of the tracheal mite is to increase winter loss in colonies.

At the moment beekeepers in the US can only use menthol crystals to reduce mite infestation. Menthol will not eradicate

the mites but it certainly reduces mite numbers and thus reduces colony loss.

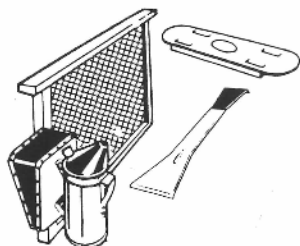
A large study in the state of Oregon has shown that colonies treated with menthol had a winter loss of 11%, compared with a winter loss of 31% for colonies not treated during that winter.

By the way, treatment of colonies with fumagillin to combat nosema disease also resulted in a lower winter loss (17% compared with 27%).

Conclusions from this survey suggest that the tracheal mite exerted a strong influence on colony losses during the winter under study (1988/89). The author suggested all beekeepers in Oregon should treat hives with menthol as soon as the honey crop for 1989 is taken off.

The evidence in the US is mounting about the seriousness of the tracheal mite. This is further reason for New Zealand to take all steps possible to prevent this mite from entering the country.

Tests with menthol and another chemical Amitraz will continue for two or three years. For a long term solution, researchers are aiming at breeding mite-resistant stocks of honey bees.



LAYING IT ON THICK ...

The total spreads market, worth in excess of \$40 million is well segmented and highly competitive. The biggest segment is jams and marmalade, with sales exceeding \$20 million. There has been some growth this year with sales for 1987 recorded at \$18.25 million.

Concerns from the health-conscious consumers may have slowed down the market somewhat, and manufacturers are responding to the new trends with the introduction of "less sugar" variants.

Overseas trends indicate that the low-sugar jams have managed to appeal to more buyers but generally the demand was not as promising as manufacturers had expected. In Britain, jam and marmalade sales fell by five percent, but we have not witnessed this trend here.

The other large segment in the spreads market is peanut butter with a retail value of around \$12 million, and 50% growth expected for 1989. It is a mature market and the steady growth is largely due to the healthiness of the product in terms of food value. Enjoyed by children and approved of by parents as a very nutritious food for hungry kids, stability in the market is ensured.

Innovation and product development is boosting sales as manufacturers respond to moves by overseas manufacturers to maximise the potential of peanut butter. Eta Foods launched in 1987 a variant unique to New Zealand, with stripes. The two flavours, raspberry and strawberry, were seen as quite a launch forward in the market. It was decided that unlike the American product which uses jelly as the accompaniment, jam was more acceptable to the New Zealand consumer.

This year Eta has launched chocolate and honey stripes, with reports that both products are proving very popular.

Another product in the spreads market, and a very acceptable accompaniment to peanut butter, is honey. Although a static market, the retail value is worth around \$12 million, with a national consumption rate of about 4000 tonnes.

There is a marked decline in the creamed variant and growth in liquid honey. Consumers are now using honey as a sugar substitute in both cooking and drinks, and honey producers are experiencing an increased demand from the manufacturers of biscuits and muesli bars.

Generally speaking, honey is seen as a pure food and is gaining popularity with the health conscious, a trend which is occurring both here and overseas.

Sales of savoury spreads are expected to soar with the return of the Salisbury range of products. New variants such as tomato and oyster will add interest to the existing range of the well-established spreads such as ham and chicken, smoked fish, salmon and shrimp, and ham and tongue.

No New Zealand pantry would be complete without a jar of Vegemite. Kiwis consume over 2.2 million jars a year, which puts us ahead of the Australian consumption level.

Basically a yeast extract from a blend of brewer's and baker's yeast, plus celery, onion, salt and other flavourings, Vegemite is undeniably versatile as a spread, a hot drink and as an additive to casseroles and many other meat dishes. It contains one of the richest sources of vitamin B complex making it an excellent natural food for children.

Adapted from the food trade magazine Counterpoint.

BUZZWORDS IS ...

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